

HINTS
ON THE
MANAGEMENT
OF
FEMALE PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

A. M. Lloyd
from my brother



J. H. Starnes



HINTS, &c.



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MANAGEMENT

OF

FEMALE PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.

BY

A CLERGYMAN'S WIFE.

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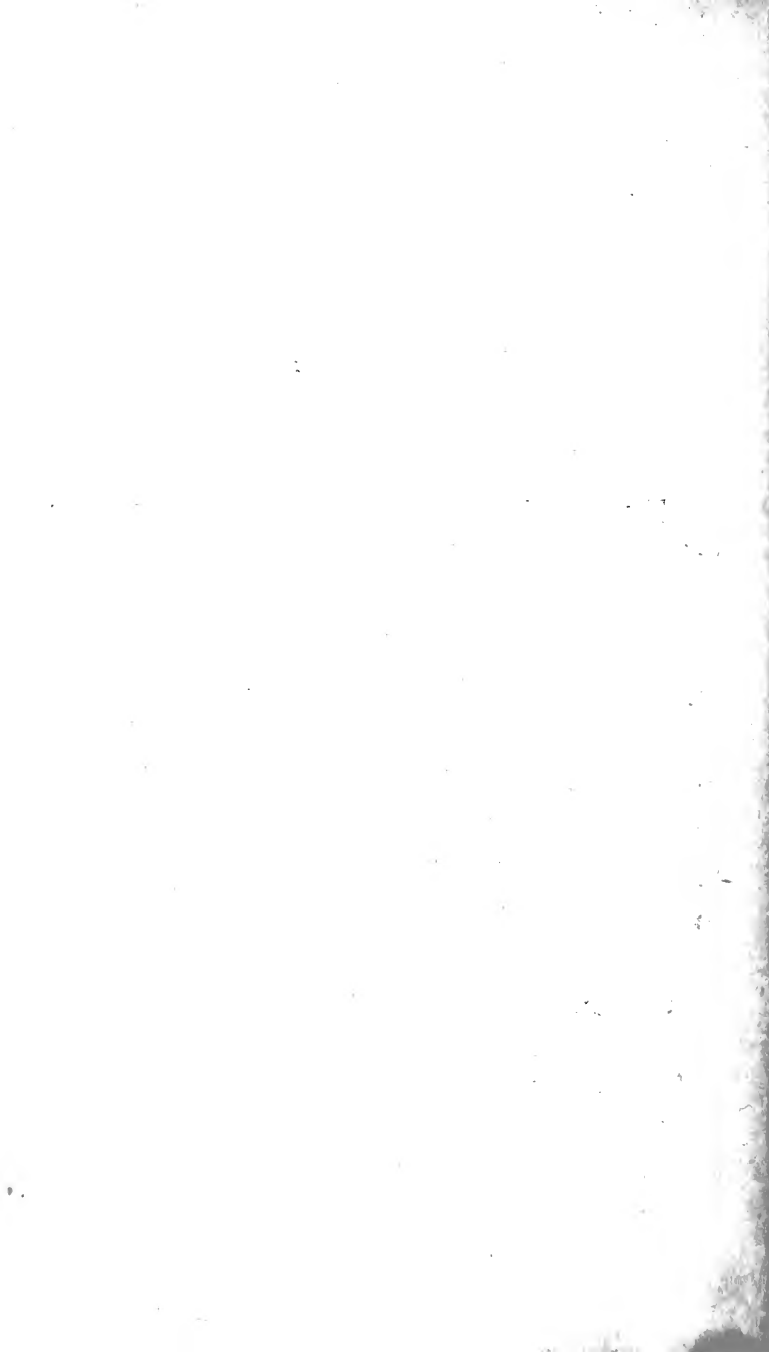
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INTRODUCTION.

THESE hints are not intended for experienced school-mistresses, or for those who have the superintendence of well-organized schools. They offer little that is new, and merely contain the practical experience of the writer in a country village. No apology is offered for going into minute details, since the prosperity of a school depends much on small matters, which might appear unimportant to the casual visitor.

Stockton Rectory, July 1848.



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HINTS,

&c.

THE SCHOOL-ROOM.

IN considering the subject of female parochial schools, it may be useful to offer, first, a few suggestions on the building itself.

The girls' school should, if possible, be situated apart from the boys', with a detached play-ground, so that no intercourse may take place between them;—the mistress's house or lodgings at some little distance from the school; by which arrangement a short walk will benefit her health, and she will not have

the temptation to leave the children during school-hours.

When the two rooms are contiguous, there should be no door between them, and the boys and girls should meet and disperse at twenty minutes difference in time. If there be but one play-ground, let it be given up to the boys, rather than they should mix with the girls. When the funds are low, and the parish small, a single teacher for both sexes, in one room, has been considered sufficient. But it is a source of much evil when that teacher is a master, and it is doubtful if any amount of learning will compensate for the freedom of manner and conduct, which will be always perceived in girls taught by a man, and associating constantly with a number of boys. A mixed school, under a woman, has not the same objections. In the first place, a well-educated female can be obtained at a salary sufficient only for a second-rate master. A mistress of decided character has no difficulty in controlling boys under eleven or twelve years of age, and excellent order pre-

vails in some schools of this description. Another plan, which is frequently adopted, is to have a married pair, when the wife merely superintends the needle-work during the afternoon, the rest of the instruction for boys and girls being entrusted to the master. This is more economical than having two single teachers, but in other respects is open to the same objections as the former arrangement. On the whole, there is no question that separate schools are the best.

A room about a third longer than its width is a good shape, with an open roof, and well ventilated with windows. To ensure coolness, one or more should be to the north. A porch is very ornamental, and is useful for containing the bonnets and pattens. From forty to fifty children may be conveniently taught in a room of twenty-eight feet by sixteen. The floor should be raised at least one step above the ground to render it dry. The first class may be placed in the centre of the room, and the desk or table of the mistress near it. In some schools, each class has a

box on the floor in the middle, containing the books and slates used in it; but except where the numbers are very large, one or two cupboards, with shelves, are more convenient. The desks are now often placed across the room, which is far preferable to the old method of having them against the walls, when they are only used during the half hour devoted to writing in copy-books. A very good plan, which has been adopted with great success in a village school, is to have three desks, forming three sides of a square in the first and second classes. They are found to be extremely convenient during the whole of school hours, and need seldom be moved except for singing. A clock, and a black board and easel, are also necessary. The walls should be covered as much as possible with good maps. The most useful ones to illustrate Scripture are three maps of Palestine, intended for the time of the tribes, of the Kings, and of our blessed Saviour, a map of St. Paul's travels, and of the wanderings of the Israelites. Those for geography, are the

maps of the world, of Europe, and of England. Forms must be placed round every class, and the children should not be allowed to stand for more than a quarter of an hour at a time. The necessity of ventilation must also be impressed on the mistress. The windows of a school-room should rarely be closed during the summer, and even in cold weather one or more should frequently be opened for a few minutes to change the air, and give a freshness to the room. Some teachers render themselves delicate for want of these precautions, especially where rooms are heated by a stove, and nothing makes children so listless and languid as breathing for some hours a close and impure atmosphere. Where coals are sold at a reasonable price, and where the room is not very large, an open fire-place is preferable to a stove. The windows should be placed sufficiently high from the ground to prevent the children from looking out of them. In village schools, a few little gardens, cultivated by the elder girls, have a very pleasing appearance near the entrance. The

room should be swept out every day by one of the monitors, and thoroughly cleaned two or three times a year, by a woman who is paid for the purpose.

SCHOOL RULES.

A FEW rules should be drawn up, and printed, for distribution among the parents. They may be to the following effect.—

That the children must come punctually to school at the hours named.

That the payments are to be made every Monday morning in advance.

That the children must be sent to school very clean, with their hair neatly combed.

That no finery will be allowed.

That the parents must not meddle with the management of the school.

That any complaint must be made to the superintendent.

A few others may be added, but it is better not to have very strict ones from the difficulty of enforcing them. It may be mentioned that no rules will be perfectly obeyed, unless the school not only is a good one, but has also obtained the confidence of the parents.

ATTENDANCE. PAYMENTS.

THE mistress should keep a register of attendance, and a book of payments.

Registers of places in a school are not of very great use.

The holidays are generally four or five weeks at corn harvest, a week at Christmas, and every Saturday in the year.

In agricultural parishes, there are times when we must submit to the absence of some of the children from school, for a few weeks, such as for bean-dropping and wheat setting. In some cases, too, leave may be given for a child to be absent occasionally under parti-

cular circumstances Thus a girl in a village school, whose mother has four younger children, stays at home “to nurse the baby,” while she is washing. Another leaves school one day in every week, for the same purpose, while her mother is gone to market. There is no object gained in over strictness on these points; but it is of very great consequence that we should have the whole of the children of our parish under the education that has been provided for them.

The payments in parochial schools vary from one penny to six-pence each child per week. In some parishes a graduated scale has been adopted with success. Thus one in a family pays two-pence, the second one penny, and the third nothing; the children of tradespeople three-pence, and of farmers six-pence. No inconvenience is felt from the difference of rank. The only variation being that the latter children purchase and use their own lesson books, and sometimes learn additional tasks at home. It is very desirable

that children should pay something, as free schools are often despised and ill attended, simply from the idea, that the instruction, which costs nothing, is worth nothing.

THE POOR.

It is often remarked by persons interested in national schools, that the children may be managed, but that it is impossible to control the parents; that they counteract the rules of the school, that they interfere whenever the children are corrected, and that they encourage them in rebelling against their teachers. This is extremely mortifying, but probably, if we were to inquire more deeply, we should find that the fault does not rest wholly with the parents. For if the children are really well taught, and no oppressive rules enforced, it is very seldom that the poor will fail to appreciate the education

offered to them. Still, supposing it to be so, we must have patience, and try to win them over to place confidence in us. And this end will be gained most by the consistency and impartiality of the teachers, by the interest we ourselves show in the children, and by our sympathy with the parents. We must endeavour to think kindly of the poor. We should remember their trials, their ignorance, their poverty, the immorality they witness, the temptations in which they live, and deal gently with their faults in thought as well as word. For we are all weak and erring, and all stand in need of the kindness and forbearance of others. Let us then have patience with the poor, remembering that there are times when none are wholly inaccessible to a word spoken in due season.

THE MISTRESS.

THE great increase of schools, and the number of training institutions, have very materially improved the qualifications of female teachers. Still, for the most part, they are inferior to masters in acquirements, and very few have been thoroughly grounded and well taught in early youth. We must not, indeed, expect perfection in a mistress, but there are some qualities which are important. Of these, religious principles and steadiness of conduct are indispensable. And next to these, energy of character and self-command are the most essential requisites in a teacher. Probably the great secret of gaining authority

over others, is the being able to govern ourselves, and though this is partly a natural gift, yet all may acquire it in some degree by care and watchfulness.

A firm and gentle manner is of great importance, and a trifling, familiar demeanour in a teacher is nearly as objectionable as an impetuous temper. The mistress must endeavour never to betray emotion of any kind. For instance, a whole class will be thrown into confusion, and even remain for some time disordered, if a mistress be not able to repress a smile whenever an absurd answer is made by a backward or dull girl. Children are much more acute observers of countenance than grown-up persons, and even in infancy are influenced by it. A mistress should know that the manner of a teacher is always reflected in her scholars; that a grave yet cheerful look and tone are indispensable; at the same time remembering that levity is not cheerfulness, nor severity discipline. A calm question will, in nine cases out of ten, produce a gentle answer, so that the effect of a

short and rough manner is obvious. The mistress should never raise her voice above its natural tone, never scold or threaten, but lecture gravely and shortly. A command given in a low tone will often arrest attention, while that in a loud one will pass unheeded. She should be able to procure silence at any moment throughout the school, by a signal, such as striking the table with a ruler.

The essential characteristics of a good school are order and quietude ; the tone of a girls' school should be strictly *feminine* ; there must be no harsh voices, no noise, no bustle. It is better to mention girls by their christian, as well as surnames,* and the mistress should at all times encourage in the children a gentle respectful manner. She must stop the beginning of insubordination, by checking the *first* improper word, the flippant answer, and the pert remark. She must

* It sounds hard and stern to call Gray, Smith, and Pearson, but there is something conciliatory in saying Mary Gray, Susan Smith, and Grace Pearson.

never listen to tales from the children, nor encourage familiarity from the parents. Many teachers err from ignorance of the principles of school government, little imagining that from one act of inconsistency, or injustice, may be traced the decline of that authority which it is always difficult to regain. By persevering in a habit of self-control, the conscientious mistress will not only avoid a principal cause of undue excitement, alike unfavourable to the health of mind and body, but she will be cultivating in herself and others "that meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God, of great price."

A good mistress may be able to *govern* a hundred children, but it is quite impossible that she can *instruct* above half that number without assistance. For this reason the monitorial system has been universally adopted in national schools, and no doubt with great success in large numbers. But, after all, it must be remembered, that it is only an economical substitute for better teaching, and

that the duties of monitors should be limited as much as possible to keeping order, and other mechanical employments.

The advantage, however, of pupil teachers, or stipendiary monitors, is very great, not only from the increased stipend that is offered to the mistress, but from the assistance they render her in the school from their age and acquirements. The only drawback arises from the mistress being obliged to devote some period of time to their instruction after school hours, which is not favourable to the health of either party. Teachers should endeavour to walk daily in the open air, and even to rise earlier for this purpose, if no other time offers itself. The salary of a mistress varies from £15 to £40 in country villages, but is considerably higher in towns. The advantages of a situation do not depend wholly upon the amount of salary, other circumstances should be taken into consideration. It is greatly to be regretted when the extreme smallness of the stipend obliges the

managers of schools to engage very inefficient persons.*

* The following advertisement appeared lately : —
“Wanted, in a clergyman’s family, a lady’s maid, who understands dress-making and hair-dressing, and who would also be capable of taking charge of a village school. A knowledge of psalmody and the National System of education required.” How the several duties here required could be performed by one person, it is difficult to suppose.

MONITORS.

EXCEPT in very small schools, monitors are necessary to assist the mistress in several ways. In a school of fifty children, two or three are quite sufficient. The first class hardly requires one, and the fewer altogether the better; for which reason, the classes should be large, bearing in mind the equal standing of the children in them. The chief duties of monitors consist in keeping order, in distributing and collecting the books, &c., and in conducting some of the lessons. Those which may be best committed to them, are arithmetic, dictation, and hearing the tasks. The scripture reading should invariably be

superintended by the mistress. The monitors should be changed every week, and paid from two-pence to four-pence each. The mistress must uphold their authority, but must see that they are not partial or tyrannical. In some schools it has been found that they have been constantly bribed by the children under them ; a proof that the monitorial system requires much vigilance on the part of the mistress. The monitors also fetch the bonnets and shawls, distributing them in silence to each class, they sweep and dust the school-room every day, and assist in fixing the needle-work in the afternoon.

“ We must not expect from monitors,” as Bishop Field justly observes, in one of his reports—“ we must not expect from monitors the authority which God allows and gives, that authority derived from age, experience, and station.”

THE annexed time table is used in a village school of from forty to fifty children, and may of course be varied according to circumstances. Two classes only are mentioned, and this will generally be found sufficient, as it is not necessary to fix precisely the employment of the younger ones. Half an hour is devoted to each study, the lessons always following in the same order, but varying in the two classes, that the mistress may superintend the scripture reading. It has also been found advantageous to commence with different lessons on alternate days, still preserving, as before remarked, the same order. On Friday morning an hour or two is appropriated to the examination of the school by the superintendent who regulates what is to be done during that time.* At five minutes to twelve

* The superintendent usually examines the first class in all the lessons learnt, and the Scripture read during the

the slates and books are collected very quietly, and the grace before meat is repeated by one of the girls, the rest saying the Amen. The monitors then fetch the bonnets and shawls, and give them out, without a word spoken, while standing in the middle of the class. The children leave the room quietly, at a signal from the mistress, each girl making a curtsey, in silence, at the door as she goes out. The afternoon in most schools is appropriated to needle-work, and should be concluded by prayers, read by the mistress. In the village school, before alluded to, singing is practised on one afternoon in the week, and secular books are read for half an hour on one or two other afternoons.

week ; she looks at the whole of the copy-books, and the slate exercises which, on that day, are generally written from a subject given the morning before.

BOOKS.

THE following books are intended for the use of the mistress only, and should be kept in her desk or drawer, where they can be locked up.

A Bible, with marginal references.

A Prayer-book.

Sinclair's Questions and Texts on Church Catechism.

Johnson's Dictionary.

Butter's Spelling Book.

Graham's Spelling Exercises.

John's Dictation Lessons.

An English Grammar.

Geography by Goldsmith.

An Arithmetic Book.

A register of Attendance.

A book of payments.

Books and Stationery adapted to a school
of from forty to fifty children,—

*From Society for Promoting Christian
Knowledge :—*

18 Bibles. Nonp. 12mo., sheep, 10*d*.

18 Testaments. Brevier, demy 12mo.,
sheep, 4½*d*.

24 Broken Catechisms. (70) ½*d*.

18 Scripture Proofs of Catechism. (206) 1*d*.

18 Crossman's Introduction. (116) 6*d*.

18 Prophecies relating to the Messiah.
(169) ¾*d*.

18 Select Hymns. (156) 2*d*.

18 Easy Hymns. (390) ¾*d*.

18 Watts' Hymns. (55) 2*d*.

- 18 Historical Questions. (412) $\frac{3}{4}d$.
18 Parables. (281) $1d$.
36 Collect Books. (31) $\frac{1}{2}d$.
18 Sunday Primers. (406) $\frac{3}{4}d$.
-

SECULAR BOOKS, &c.

*From Society for Promoting Christian
Knowledge :—*

- 24 Arithmetical Tables. (278) $1d$.
12 First Book. $1\frac{1}{2}d$.
12 Second Book. $6d$.
12 Third Book. $1s$.
18 Outlines of English Grammar. $1d$.
12 First Volume of Instructor. $1s. 6d$.
12 Sets of Script Cards. (270)
18 Outlines of Geography. $1s$.
12 English History. No. I. — Historical
Series.
-

36 Slates, without frames.

A packet of hard slate pencils.

A box of chalk for the black board.

A box of steel pens, containing eight dozen.

18 Pen-holders, at 1*d*.

36 Pencil-cases of zinc or tin, at 1*d*.

A FEW OTHER BOOKS SUITED TO PAROCHIAL
SCHOOLS.

Pinnock's Bible and Gospel History. 9*d*.

Dowling's Catechism of Geography. 9*d*.

First Reading Book. Published by Irish
Society. 2*d*.

Second ditto. 7*d*.

Third ditto. 1*s*. 2*d*.

Sixth ditto for Female Schools. 1*s*. 8*d*.

The First Book from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and the First

Book from the Irish Society, are superior to the old publications of the same sort. If we compare these with the Child's First Book (282), we shall perceive the difference. Take, for instance, a few instances in one syllable from each:—"The cow gives us nice milk to drink, her flesh is good to eat, and her hide makes us shoes. The horns of a cow make combs to comb our hair with, so we see that each part of her is of use. We ought to be kind to the poor cow which gives us such good things. None but a bad boy or girl will throw stones at a cow." And then the following:—"Go to now, ye rich men, who have lived by fraud, weep and howl for the pain that shall come upon you. He that doth ill, shall eat the fruit of his own way. God shall cast trouble upon him, and shall not spare. Men shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place. If a man vow a vow to the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a vow, he shall not break his word."—Child's First Book, Part I. Any one who has heard a class of very young

children questioned on this last extract, will have seen the absurdity, if not profaneness of inserting it in a lesson book, commencing with the alphabet. Except on Sundays, when Simpson's Primer may be used, it is far better to teach young children to read from secular books, than to apply the Holy Scriptures or any extracts from them to that purpose. When they begin to read pretty well, the parables of our blessed Saviour may be used, and then the New and Old Testaments. Large sheets placed on a stand or easel, are the best for beginners, who are apt very soon to wear out their books by fingering them. All Bibles, Testaments, and bound books should be covered with brown holland, and if all the lesson-books resembling pamphlets have a cover of strong brown paper, sewn on with two or three stitches of hemp thread, they will last twice as long as they would otherwise do. The name of the school should be written on the title-page of every book. The stock must be examined occasionally, and some part of it renewed every year. Books and stationery

used in the school should be wholly gratuitous, if possible, and must not be removed from it. If the children learn their lessons at home, other copies should be lent or given to them. They are sometimes glad to purchase books and stationery, but these should not be taken from the regular school stock. In parishes where the children are compelled to buy their own copy-books and pens, the poorer ones are under great disadvantage in not being always able to find money for this purpose.

PRAYERS.

DIFFERENT forms of prayer are used in schools, but none surpass those taken from the Liturgy. The three first collects appointed for morning and evening service, including that for the previous Sunday, the Lord's Prayer, and the two last, are frequently used for this purpose. The whole to be read by the mistress, the children kneeling with their eyes closed, and repeating the amen, and the Lord's Prayer after her. Singing is often added after the prayers; when this is the case, the tunes should be varied, as nothing gives such a monotonous drawling style to the singing, as the perpetual repetition of the same hymn or psalm.

SCRIPTURE READING.

THE collect appointed for the second Sunday in Advent is usually repeated before reading the Scriptures, the children of the class kneeling and closing their eyes, the rest of the school keeping silence by a signal from the mistress. One chapter in the Bible, or, if long, part of one, the reading of which should occupy about a quarter of an hour, is sufficient, the children sitting down, and each rising as it comes to her turn. The mistress should superintend the scripture reading of all the classes, observing that it be done with reverence and correctness. The children should then stand while they are questioned,

which will take up the rest of the time. And here the ability of the teacher will be shown, in directing the attention of the children to the prominent facts of the chapter, and in confining their answers individually to each question. It is a good rule that she should never deliver more than one sentence at a time. And it has been found useful to go through the chapter first with the books open, and then with them closed ; at least, there is generally time for some answers from memory. In most classes, there are one or two girls more clever and forward than the rest ; these may be made to sit down during the second questioning, and occupied with slate exercises, while the rest are examined. A good teacher will often vary the lesson, by putting a few questions on former chapters, or other parts of the Bible, and by asking the spelling and meaning of a few words which have occurred. The children's attention should also be constantly directed to the maps, which give a great interest to Scripture reading, and impress it on the mind. Thus the wanderings

of the Israelites, and the travels of St. Paul, will hardly be understood without reference to the maps. The lower classes are usually confined to the gospels in the New Testament, and selections from the old. In the first class, it is usual to read one book through from the Old Testament, and then one from the New, alternately. As soon as children can read at all, a few easy questions should be asked on the subject of the lesson. Even the little ones who learn from elementary sheets should be desired to spell small words, and tell their meanings, which interests them very much. If there be a map of comparative animals, they are much amused at pointing out the birds and beasts in it. The elliptical mode of questioning is very useful for young children, but the teacher should avoid it in hearing the upper classes. The plan of taking places is much discontinued in national schools, and certainly during the reading and questioning it disturbs the class considerably, promotes noise, and does not appear to produce any corresponding

good effect. It is very difficult to prevent the reading *in tone*, especially in those counties where it is observable in the *speaking* of the poor. Probably the best way is to dictate some very familiar sentences, which should be written down, and read by each girl in turn. The reading of children in towns is much more free from this defect of tone, than of those in the country.

SECULAR READING.

IF no other time can be found, a short period in the afternoon may be devoted to secular reading. It is very desirable that every school should possess some secular books, and it is much to be regretted when they cannot be procured, and when the Bible is consequently used as a lesson-book. Besides the obvious impropriety of this practice, the Scripture phraseology is so much easier than any other, that children who have been accustomed to the Bible only can hardly read fluently in other books. The secular books generally used, are one or more volumes of the Instructor, and the second, third, and

fourth reading books from the Society for Promoting Christian knowledge. The histories of England read in schools are generally too dry, and dwell too long on events before the conquest, so that it is some time before children advance beyond the time of the Saxons. A concise history in a simple style, and an elementary catechism on the same subject, would be very useful. Where the funds are low, eight or nine copies of each secular reading book might be sufficient, allowing two children to use one book, and if carefully covered, they would last a long time

SLATE EXERCISES.

It is almost impossible to over value the use of slate exercises, to which at least half an hour daily should be devoted. They may be divided into lessons from *dictation*, and from *memory*. They are a perpetual source of interest to the children, they illustrate every study, and smooth many difficulties. Indeed, as regards spelling, writing, composition, and the exercise of the mental powers, they will be found invaluable. The time spent in learning long columns of spelling is often comparatively wasted ;* for it has been found

* The writer has hardly ever met with a female servant educated in a national school who could write a washing

that children who can spell *vivâ voce* with the greatest ease “imcomprehensibility,” &c., are not able to write correctly familiar sentences such as the following. “I hear with my ear,” “She came here last year. Where are you going? We were going out. They may go there, and read their books,” &c. A number of useful dictation lessons may be found in “Butter’s Spelling,” “Graham’s Exercises,” and “John’s Easy Dictation Lessons.” In the latter book, directions for its use are prefixed. Pieces of poetry, fables, and short narratives, may be used for this purpose. The elder girls should each have a copy-book, into which pieces of poetry, and other dictation lessons, are to be transcribed.

Slate exercises from *memory* are also extremely useful, and may, besides the half hour, occupy any odd minutes. The younger children may commence with the following.

The days of the week.

The months of the year.

bill correctly, or a simple letter to her friends, without the most absurd mistakes in orthography.

Articles of dress for girls.

Things in the school.

Names of animals.

Names of birds.

Names of trees and flowers.

Articles of furniture.

Things in a kitchen.

Things good for food.

Articles sold by a grocer, and many others.

The first class will soon be able to write
the

Names of the patriarchs.

Names of the tribes.

Names of the apostles.

Names of places in Canaan.

Names of counties of England.

Names of countries in Europe.

Parts of speech, with examples.

In fact, these exercises may be often varied, and made a constant source of interest and improvement. When more advanced, they will be able to write abstracts of the lives of Moses, Abraham, St. Peter, &c., and descriptions of places. The collects for the next

Sunday should every week be learnt, and then written from memory. The transposing of poetry into prose, and writing synonymes of the principal words in a sentence or two, are good exercises. In a village school, the elder children have been known to write very fair abstracts of the sermon heard at church. It is of great consequence that children should begin writing very young on slates, which will greatly facilitate their progress in copy-books, though many teachers are incredulous on this point. No lines should ever be ruled on slates, the advantage of which is very great in enabling them to write straightly, and no rulers must be allowed for the children's use. They should commence by copying from the black board, and from the script cards, and afterwards some very easy words from dictation, or with books open before them. The best size for slates is eight inches by six. They should be hung over the shoulders by a string, or where the children sit at desks, suspended by a hook, at the outside of them, when not in use. One child

should be employed to wash them every afternoon. The pencils must be hard, and never be used without a pencil-case of zinc or tin.

WRITING.

It is a great defect in a mistress to write ill herself, though there are few who may not improve by care and practice. The hand is often characteristic of the writer, and shows many of the mental qualities. Unless in a very large school, the mistress should by all means set the copies, and for this purpose an hour or two on a Saturday morning will be found sufficient. A few perpendicular lines in pencil, ruled between the words, improve the appearance of a copy, by keeping them straight. When the writing of a mistress is very defective, or the school large, the Mulhauser copy-books may be used with great

advantage ; but a very good running hand is not often produced by them. The copies should be made as much as possible instructive. Thus such words for text-hand as aberration, demoralize, circumlocution, &c., are very unintelligible to children, or such sentences as "Detraction is ignoble," "Quote established authorities," &c. But words and sentences like the following are easily understood, and worth remembering, "Birmingham," "Edinburgh," Camel, a beast of burden. Paris, the capital of France. Aaron, the first high priest of Israel. Type, a figure or shadow. Vine, a tree which bears grapes, &c., &c.

The eye of the mistress must be on the children while writing ; she should examine their books every day, observe, and mark with a pencil, each fault, and commend and encourage neatness. At least two years should be devoted to round or text-hand before they attempt small-hand in their books ; for the latter cannot be properly attained without a considerable proficiency in the former. When

children begin by writing for a year or two on their slates, they will be found to make much greater progress with their pens. It has before been mentioned, that when advanced in writing, the elder girls may transcribe their dictation lessons instead of copies. The pens should be steel, and the most flexible purchased for schools.

LESSONS BY HEART.

SIMULTANEOUS teaching or bawling lessons, as they are sometimes called, are ill-suited to the feminine character of a girl's school. Indeed, they distract much, and teach little with any accuracy. A far better method is for the children to learn their lessons in separate books. Before they begin, they must read them over to the mistress, who should explain the difficult words, and ascertain if they understand the meaning of each sentence. Half an hour is quite sufficient for this study, each girl repeating her tasks to herself in a low voice. In the first class, the lessons may consist of "Crossman"

or "Prophecies," and hymns every day, geography and grammar on alternate days. "Faith and Duty," and "Scripture proofs of the Church Catechism," are also very instructive; but the children should sometimes learn *whole* chapters from the Bible and Psalms by heart. In the second class, Historical Questions, Broken Catechism, Easy Hymns and Geography are suitable; and for the little children, Watts's Hymns and First Catechism. *Before* they can read, the monitor may teach them a line or sentence at a time, each child repeating it singly after her, thus avoiding all undue noise. Girls should not be obliged to learn tasks at home, when their mothers are generally glad of their services; besides, the six or seven hours spent at school ought to be sufficient for all instruction. The poor of all ages are so partial to hymns, that it is very desirable to cultivate this taste to some purpose. "Select Hymns" are a pretty good collection, but many of them are too much curtailed, and "Easy Hymns" are indifferent as compositions,

though children are fond of them. A good selection of hymns for schools would be a useful publication, including Bishop Heber's and some others. Crossman's Introduction is an excellent little book, and it seems a pity that it has been banished from some schools, on account of an unsound answer at page 37, which may easily be altered or omitted.

Geography should begin by the map of England, and the counties should be learnt and pointed out in some such division as the following. The six northern, six southern, four western, six eastern, four bordering on Wales, and fourteen midland. Then the chief towns, sea-ports, manufacturing towns, rivers, and boundaries. Europe should next be learnt, including the countries, capital cities, mountains, &c., and then it will be time enough to know the definition of a continent, island, and peninsula. Children are fond of geography, and maps always interest them ; but it is a mistake to begin by teaching them the circles, zones, and meridians,

which are difficult to be understood. When grammar is learnt, it must be illustrated by slate exercises. There are few mistresses who really understand grammar, which is the reason why it is often imperfectly taught. A fair knowledge of writing and spelling may be acquired without grammar, but of course not a proficiency in either of these without some acquaintance with it. It will be found useful, if the children are desired to write down examples of every part of speech, and then connect them in sentences. Where it is required that girls should well understand grammar and history, a part of one or two afternoons in the week must be given up to these studies. In this case, it will not be sufficient to read the History of England only, some elementary catechism must also be learnt by heart. If the lessons mentioned here appear too long, or too many, it must be remembered that all tasks should be short, and learnt very perfectly. When a girl is promoted to the first class, she should commit to memory a prayer for private use. One

or two from Crossman may be selected for this purpose. These prayers should be repeated to the mistress or superintendent two or three times a year, as long as the girls remain at school, who should frequently be reminded of the duty and necessity of their daily use. Perhaps it is better not to ask if this is the case, lest they should be tempted to tell an untruth on so important a subject.

To the poor especially, whose busy life almost precludes the possibility of study after the period of childhood, the storing of the memory with good thoughts, is of inestimable advantage. How often has it happened that persons in sickness, in affliction, and in old age, have found comfort and consolation from hymns and psalms learnt at school! The memory in young children is so exceedingly retentive, and they learn by heart so easily at a very early age, that it seems obvious to exercise and turn to account that faculty which God has given them, and which is peculiarly their own. In some schools, either from a scanty supply of books, or from a

mistaken notion of the master or mistress, *oral teaching* is much adopted, instead of lessons learnt from books. Whole classes repeat their tasks simultaneously, and explanations are delivered *vivâ voce* by the teacher. Now though this method may be a good auxiliary to the old system, it must not be considered a substitute for it. The result is that much of the knowledge required is superficial, for what is gained without trouble is seldom of much use or value.* And as in former years dry tasks were the *whole* of the instruction given at school; so in the present day there is an attempt to simplify too much, and to bring down everything to the capacity of children. In fact, it is not necessary they should understand the whole of what they learn on religious subjects, and the school

* An advertisement to the following effect appeared lately :—" The Rev. ——— prepares young gentlemen for the public schools and universities. His plan being principally *oral teaching*, now so preferable to the old methods, it will be found deserving the attention of parents," &c., &c.

teacher or visitor, instead of attempting to *reason* with them, and to prove what they are taught, should rather accustom them to take much on *trust*. It is the simple *faith*, that beautiful attribute of a young child's mind, which was so much commended by our blessed Saviour. While, therefore, we endeavour to steer clear of the errors of former years let us try to avoid the mistakes of the present day.

LESSONS REPEATED.

DURING the next half hour, the lessons just learnt should be said to the monitor or the mistress, and the rest of the time taken up in repetition or examination of former tasks ; for example, a part of the Church Catechism, which may be repeated once or twice a week in each class, some hymns, grammar, or geography learnt before, and a portion of the multiplication or pence tables, as the mistress may direct. Without constantly recurring to former lessons, they will soon be entirely forgotten. The only objections to grammar and history in female schools, is the difficulty of finding time for them when the afternoons are required to be given up to needle-work.

ARITHMETIC.

THE younger children should commence writing figures on their slates, at the same time as the letters. The multiplication table may be taught by the monitor, who should read one sentence at a time, each repeating it singly after her, but the upper classes must have books for this purpose. Great attention should be paid to the tables, and a frequent repetition of them made ; for where children are backward and dull at figures, it will generally be found that they are imperfect in their tables. The black board is very useful to beginners in arithmetic, but the elder girls should not be confined entirely to that mode

of instruction. Different sums should often be given to each separately, and they should be required to work others from dictation; for unless the plan is varied, they will not become proficient in figures. Questions in mental arithmetic exceedingly quicken the power of thought, and it appears astonishing how readily children answer them, who have been accustomed to it. These exercises should be very easy at first, and it is often curious to observe that each child will arrive at the same conclusion, by quite a different process. The four first rules, simple and compound, are the most necessary for girls, though in some schools they advance as far as boys. The bills of tradesmen, such as those of a draper or grocer, containing a number of articles sold in their shops, are useful as sums. Numeration must be carefully taught, both by reading and writing figures from dictation. Children who are far advanced in arithmetic have been found incapable of writing down five or six figures, such as, for example, half a million, or sixty

thousand. In a school where the boys were extremely quick at arithmetic, the master was in the habit of distributing round the class a number of slips of paper, on which were written different questions, and the answers were required from each boy without the aid of slates.

NEEDLEWORK.

THE afternoons in female schools are usually devoted to needle-work, and it is most essential that every girl should be a good sempstress. Those who have been in districts where lace-making and other trades are practised to the exclusion of needle-work, cannot fail to have observed the ragged appearance of the women, and the comfortless state of their dwellings. One day in every week the children should be allowed to bring their own work; but on the others, they ought to do what is provided for them. If not, they will improve little, and never be able to execute neat work. The first class should

be employed in making fine shirts, in fine marking, and doing any work requiring great neatness and proficiency. They should be taught how to fix their own work, to cut the button-holes, and to keep every part extremely clean. The second class are usually employed in coarser shirts, and other linen, and in baby clothes for the poor. They also mark samplers. The little children generally sew patchwork for quilts, samplers in crewels, and any coarse work that can be procured for them. It is recommended to make all they do of some use; for it is very discouraging when they have spent several hours in hemming a long strip, to see it cut off, and thrown into the fire, and the piece turned down for hemming again, to share the same fate. Every piece, however small, may be sewn together for cottage dusters. The patch-work should consist of equal-sized pieces, which will encourage neatness in the children. Squares of about two inches, with the alternate pieces of one colour, such as buff or blue, look very well, and make useful

bed or cradle quilts for poor people. Old-fashioned samplers, containing fancied resemblances to animals, birds, &c., are now nearly exploded. Fine samplers, of woollen bolting canvass, and of book muslin, are really pretty, when worked in one or two colours, such as crimson and dark blue, and made of a small size. Samplers, on which were marked short psalms, the alternate verses in these two colours, were much admired in a village school. Several maps of Palestine, also marked in the same school, are specimens of great neatness and accuracy, and are highly prized by those who possess them. Nothing denominated fancy work should be done in a parochial school. In a country parish, a plan has been adopted of cutting out coarse shirts for labouring men, and other articles of under clothing for the poor, and having them made in the school. A woman is appointed to sell them, who receives something on each article for her trouble. The price includes a trifling addition to the cost of materials, which is given

to the children for making them. By this means a school may be always supplied with work.

It is a great encouragement to the children when they are paid a small sum for their work. The best and neatest sewers are not always the quickest girls: indeed, those who excel with their hands, are seldom the cleverest with their heads. It may here be mentioned that linen and calico should, if possible, be washed before it is cut out. The mistress should be careful to make the children use coarse thread for all their work. In some schools very fine cotton is adopted, with the idea that it looks the best, which is a mistaken notion, since *good* work looks better with coarse thread, and is much stronger. Taylor's thread, on black reels, has been found the best, and is to be met with at most drapers' shops. The monitors assist the mistress in fixing the work, and in keeping order and silence in their respective classes. In some schools, the girls sing labour and other songs while they are at work, which

gives cheerfulness to the afternoons, but where they sing at church, great care must be taken that their tone and style do not degenerate in any way by this practice.

VOCAL MUSIC.

THERE are several popular systems for teaching vocal music, which appear to succeed well under a good teacher, but none surpass the excellent system of Hullah. His exercises on the different intervals, whether intended for improving the voice, for correcting the ear, or to teach reading in time, are fully capable of producing these ends. Probably the reason a greater improvement has not been effected in the singing in parochial schools, is the superficial knowledge of music, which most teachers acquire; for some of those who profess to teach singing, can hardly write a single bar correctly. It would be a

great advantage to them, as well as to their scholars, if the superintendents of schools, many of whom have had the advantage of early instruction, would make themselves acquainted with this system. It offers a great facility in teaching singing, and is, besides, a good groundwork for music in general. In this respect, it has an advantage over more superficial plans. A lesson on one afternoon in the week will do much in instructing the children of a school, with the aid of any odd minutes that can be spared daily for practice. It is not necessary to enter into the details of the system, which are to be found in the books of instruction. Two or three sets of sheets, each containing ten, a stand or easel, and a tuning fork of Do, are requisite for a school. If possible, a few minutes every day should be spared to practise the common chord and scale of Do, with the aid of the fork, and afterwards they may be sung in canon. As soon as the ear becomes familiar with the chord of Do, other major keys, containing from one to four flats and sharps,

should be found, and the chord and scale practised in those keys. No music must be sung, without commencing with the chord and scale in its key. Those girls who have the best ears should be selected for leading the rest. When they are all well acquainted with their notes, some will be found who can take a second part as easily as a first. A correct ear is indispensable in singing part music, and girls who practise without the help of an instrument, are more accurate than those who have had that assistance. To those who are quite ignorant on this subject, it may be as well to remark, that written music is adapted to the natural notes of the human voice, consisting of the intervals of the diatonic scale. Thus an untaught person with a good ear will sing the scale with the intervals correctly from whatever note he commences. It should be clearly explained to beginners that sharps and flats are merely marks for writing the intervals correctly in different keys, as they exist in the natural voice. Those who attempt to teach singing in schools,

should endeavour to understand something of the theory of music themselves, otherwise their scholars will never make much progress. Great care must be taken that they do not sing through their noses, and acquire a drawling tone. Bad habits of this kind are very difficult to correct when once formed. The forte and piano parts must never be forgotten, particularly in sacred music.

Some pleasing rounds and canons are to be found in vocal music for equal voices, published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

WHEN the mistress possesses self-command, very few punishments will be needed, and no severe ones. There should be no rod or cane in a girls' school. Learning a task, standing in a corner, or on a form, will be found quite sufficient punishment in most cases. Care must be taken to adopt no punishment which is a source of inconvenience to the parents. Thus, keeping children at school, out of the usual hours, should be resorted to only as a last resource, since the mothers will feel the want of their services at that time. Sometimes the quickest and cleverest girls are the most refractory, learning their tasks

in a much shorter time than the others, and disturbing the rest by talking and distracting their attention. One great secret of order is constant employment, and it is of the greatest advantage not to allow these girls to be idle for a moment. They should be always engaged at odd times with slate exercises. Very good order rarely exists in schools which are governed by severity, and to persons accustomed to visit them, the mode of control is almost immediately manifested in the countenances of the children. A reproof or grave lecture from a good mistress, delivered in a low voice, often produces a greater effect than a severe punishment. But rules can hardly be laid down on this head. Punishments much depend on the dispositions of the children. Expulsion from school should never be resorted to, except when the example and society of the offender appears certain to contaminate the rest of the children. When rewards are distributed, it is better to give one, if possible, to every girl in the school. Books and articles of dress are the usual gifts, differ-

ing in value, according to the age or progress of the children. The first class, for instance, should have books of a higher price than the rest. School feasts are very pleasant things, and if attended by an examination of the children, prove a great encouragement to all parties. In fact, whatever stimulates the teachers to exertion, and creates an interest in schools, cannot fail to produce benefit.

DRESS.

THE love of dress is commonly said to be the source of all frivolity and vanity in women, and indeed, when it produces in girls a fondness for finery, a wish to imitate their superiors, and a desire to attract attention, it is deservedly a subject of reproach. To remedy this apparent defect in the female character, many excellent persons have attired girls in scrupulously plain, and even antique dresses, plain caps or cropped hair, aprons with bibs, &c., upon the principle that long habit will wear out the taste for finery. But numerous instances have shown almost the reverse to be

the result, for no sooner is the girl emancipated from this restraint, than her very inexperience leads her to run into the opposite excess. The period must at last arrive, when she has the full power of choosing her own attire, and it will, it is thought, be found to answer best, to allow her gradually to exercise her own judgment, under the influence of her mother, even should both commit some mistakes on the subject. On considering the love of dress a little more, we shall see that it is the *abuse* rather than the existence of this quality, that leads to folly and vanity, and that after all, it is one of those tendencies of our fallen nature which may be turned to good. For, from this instinctive fondness for dress in women, may proceed, if properly directed, the love of order, of cleanliness, of economy, of neatness. And it may not be too much to affirm, that a young woman who is totally regardless of her appearance, is also in some degree deficient in modesty and self-respect. It is, in fact, the bad taste, and the

wish to appear above their station, which, in girls, we should most discourage. It is the showy print, the gaudy ribbon, the artificial flower, the string of beads, that we must condemn ; but the clean frock, the tidy shawl, the mended stockings, we should commend ; the best dress kept, not for the fair, or the wake, or the dance, but for God's day, and for God's house. Much may be done in the way of advice among the poor, as well as by the establishment and regulation of clothing-clubs. We should recommend them to purchase the durable material, the strong calico, the good-washing print, preferring at all times *wear* and usefulness to show. With regard to the dress of children in parochial schools, some persons insist on short hair,* and extreme plainness of clothing ; and others on

* In some schools, the short hair is a perpetual "bone of contention," between the managers and the parents of the children. At the present day, when long hair is worn by all ranks and ages, the advantage of this rule seems uncertain.

their wearing a uniform attire. The great point, however, really is, to exclude all finery, and to insist on their being always sent to school perfectly clean and tidy. They should be told to preserve their clothes, to mend them neatly, and to keep them in good order. There is certainly something very pleasing to the eye in a number of children dressed exactly alike, but, except in old endowments, it seems doubtful whether any good results from it. Long hair is much to be preferred in a school for several reasons, and we appear to have a scriptural authority for allowing it in females. The neatest mode is to have the back hair tied up behind in a simple knot, and the front hair put straight back above the ears. Anything that marks the difference from boys is desirable, and a class of girls with their hair arranged in this manner, has a peculiarly neat and feminine appearance. Some teachers and visitors of schools have, by way of example, endeavoured to bring down, as it were, their own dress to that of the children, but is it not better that girls should

be accustomed to see a difference in dress, suited to a difference of station, which they cannot fail to observe whenever they go out into the world ?

SUPERINTENDENCE.

It is doubtful whether a school ever prospers in all respects without judicious superintendence. That of the clergyman of the parish is of the first importance. He will regulate the religious instruction, and direct the books that are to be used in the school, and his examinations on the Holy Scriptures, and on the Church Catechism, will be invaluable. But it may not be amiss to say that the tone and feminine character of a girls' school, will be chiefly promoted by efficient female superintendence; not a committee of ladies, where each member may wish to enforce her own plans at the risk of all regu-

larity and uniformity, but one or two who will really apply their minds to the object. Except when she has a very young family, the clergyman's wife, by position, is particularly fitted to do much in this way. It is hardly enough to say that she does not understand schools ; let her direct her best attention to the subject of parochial education, let her even put aside her favourite pursuits, and let her use her best energies, and press all her acquirements into the service. Let her remember that she has not arrived at her present situation by accident, but it is that in which, of all others, God has seen fit to place her, and that He may require much at her hands ! She whose heart is in her work, will feel a constant source of interest in every child of her parish ; her thoughts will often wander to the school, and she will be regarded by both the mistress and her scholars, as their best friend and counsellor. The superintendent should take care that her presence promote cheerfulness in the school, and be a means of encouragement to all engaged in it.

Even where there may be much to correct and amend, she will do it gradually, and, whenever possible, state her wishes to the mistress in private. Most teachers excel in some point, or in teaching one thing, above the rest; and when this is the case, and the result good, it is better not to disarrange their method, even should it not coincide with her own plans. On other subjects, in which the mistress is not so successful, the superintendent should carefully examine her defects, gently point them out, and assist her in rectifying them. Where the mistress is young or inexperienced, there will be many occasions when the discretion and judgment of the clergyman's wife will be found of the greatest use. It is indeed a question whether a young woman, of eighteen or nineteen, however qualified, *ought* to be entrusted with the training of girls of twelve or fourteen, who are much more forward in their ideas than children of a higher station. A young person of that age cannot possess the *moral weight*, which is alone the result of more advanced

years and experience. Probably one reason why the education of the poor has met with many opposers, and why, in some places, where efficient schools exist, the young girls have not seldom turned out unsatisfactorily, is, that their training has been left entirely to masters or very young teachers. And we may at least learn a lesson from the assertion, even while we are disposed to deny the fact, that the old dame of former years, who taught her scholars little, but lectured them much on prudence and morality, produced a better result, than is the case in some of our modern national schools. In parishes where the funds are low, or where from other circumstances, the patrons of parochial schools are compelled to engage young or inexperienced teachers, the duty of regular superintendence is especially incumbent on those who are permitted to take a part in the management. Above all, the clergyman's wife should use all her influence and talents to raise the moral character of the school. It is also doubtful whether the plan of sending a young person

at once from a training institution to the charge of a large school, is a good one, and whether anything but practical experience can give her an insight into human nature, or in fact render her capable of governing the *little world* that is before her. It might be more advantageous to herself and her scholars to be contented for a few years, with a lower salary, and a smaller number of children, under kind and judicious superintendence. By this means village schools might have the advantage of a trained teacher, many of which are now obliged to put up with persons whose knowledge is lamentably scanty on almost every branch of education.

INSPECTION.

THERE is frequently a prejudice against inspection, though it generally exists where, from different causes, schools are unsatisfactory, or ill organized. The visits of an inspector often produce a lasting benefit, and there is no doubt that the periodical examination of schools has done more than anything else to stir up all parties to increased exertion, and to show the necessity of improvement in the education of the children of the poor. The office of inspector is often an unpalatable one ; he comes to discover faults, to suggest improvements, and, in fact, to point out whatever requires amendment. The generality of

teachers and patrons, seeing few schools but their own, are surprised that the inspector does not find more to praise. They do not consider that his business is to ascertain the state of education in that parish, or in this school, and that it is almost impossible that he can be acquainted with the peculiar circumstances of each case. Thus, in the parish of A. is a well-endowed school, supported by an affluent rector or large subscriptions. In the parish of B. the clergyman strains his income to increase the teacher's salary, and no other means can be found to promote an efficient school. The state of education is of course widely different in these two parishes, and the inspector frames his report accordingly. In this he is not wrong; the school of B. is inadequate, though the clergyman and his wife have used their utmost endeavours to render it what it is. This variety of cases and circumstances, therefore, make the office of inspector often a difficult one. He who has a kind and judicious manner will have advanced one step at least, in the confidence of

both children and teachers. Those accustomed to schools, perceive the great difference of intelligence manifested in a class, when questioned by different persons. Thus one examiner will arrest the attention of the children immediately, while another, equally well qualified, will fail to interest them at all. And it is difficult for the bystander to account for this, though the fact is so. It arises probably from the power which some persons possess of making their questions thoroughly intelligible to the young, and also from the great effect that manner and countenance have on children from the earliest age. Some examiners are too much wedded to particular systems, without sufficiently observing the result. Thus, for instance, where the writing is good, it is unnecessary to recommend the Mulhauser copy-books, though they may have been very useful in other schools. On the whole, the visits of a judicious inspector cannot fail to act as a stimulus and encouragement to both teachers and children.

CONCLUSION.

THOUGH the objections against educating the lower classes are nearly obsolete, yet there are some persons who still entertain them. But we may safely affirm that they are those, who have had no practical experience on the subject, who, in fact, are not familiar with the working of good parochial schools, and who have never carefully watched the effect of them in a parish. It has been sometimes asserted that learning the higher branches of education, has raised girls above their station, and if such be the case, it is greatly to be regretted.* But probably it will be found that

* The best-educated girl known to the writer, has, since

it is the tone of the school, or some other defect, rather than the subjects taught in it, that has fostered self-sufficiency. And to those who suppose that a girl does not derive much practical benefit from a knowledge of geography and grammar, it may be said that she will, if properly instructed, have gained, at least, in the acquisition of such subjects, a steady habit of fixing her attention, which will be of the greatest value to her through life. Let us inquire what qualities should be cultivated in women; let us look around a village, for instance, and observe who are the most estimable among its females. It is they, who, following the ever admirable advice of St. Paul, are "discreet, chaste, keepers at home." In educating the female sex, we must bear this divine counsel in mind, ever remembering that no learning, nor acquirements, can compensate for the want of modesty and prudence in women, and that it is leaving school, always preferred "drudging" farm places, as they are called, though she has been offered easier situations in higher service.

for home duties and domestic service, that we should train them. What a world of sin and folly would be saved if women were "keepers at home!" Let us then discourage our youthful females from frequenting public meetings or assemblies of any kind, whether they be the fairs and mayings of the south, or the statutes and wakes of other counties. We shall not accomplish the end by the strictness of our school rules, nor the severity of our advice, nor the dread of our displeasure; but more, a great deal, it may be, by the silent influence of our own example, the regulation of our own households, and the consistency of our own conduct. It is a subject of deep regret to observe the temptations to which girls are exposed in service. Temptations which we should tremble to see our own daughters encounter. Not only in the houses of farmers and tradesmen, but even in families of the higher classes, young men and women are associated together, without the guidance and control of older persons, who, by age and experience, are capable of exercising an autho-

rity over them. The heads of families often complain of the unsteadiness of their servants, and express surprise that in these educational days so much immorality in that class prevails. But when we observe the little care that is taken of young servants, the inconsistency they witness in their superiors, and the temptations to which they are subjected, our surprise might almost be excited that more do not turn out ill. While, therefore, in female schools, we cultivate the *minds*, let us not forget the *manners* of those educated in them. Let us remind our girls of the value of truth and honesty, of industry and virtue; let us point out to them the evils of vanity, and the misery that is inseparable from sin; and, lastly, let us impress upon them, that all learning is of no avail, unless it makes them better children, better women, and better Christians.

In conclusion, we must never despair, nor relax our exertions, because we do not immediately perceive a good result. There will ever be some tares among the wheat. And

even should any of our flock wander from the right way, into one of shame and sorrow, who shall say that the pure and holy lessons of their childhood, may not at last call forth the tear of penitence? who shall say that the gentle warnings of the teacher of their youth, may not win them back again at last, and tell them *where* to seek for mercy and for pardon?

It may be, that we shall never live to witness the full effect of our labours; it may be, that it is good for us to receive many a check, and discouragement, and disappointment, in our work. But it is a happy and a blessed thing, when we are permitted, in after years, to see the child, whom we have trained, moving onward through a distracting world, in the strait and narrow path of duty.

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